HEALTH-CARE SYSTEMS AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (HEALTH SYSTEMS INTERVENTIONS)

Goal 3: Expand access to and utilization of coordinated, proactive and quality health-care services.

Rationale:

Recent health-care system changes in managing chronic disease involve the move from the traditional specialty clinic-based, symptom-focused and uncoordinated care, to a more comprehensive disease management model of care. Effective use of information and medical technology is one of the strategies the Institute of Medicine recommended to improve the quality of health care in the United States. Access and utilization of high quality health care across the continuum of care must be improved to realize the full potential of prevention and disease management.

Health systems interventions improve the clinical environment to more effectively deliver quality preventive services and help Americans more effectively use and benefit from those services. The result: some chronic diseases and conditions will be avoided completely, and others will be detected early, or managed better to avert complications and progression and improve health outcomes. Health system and quality improvement changes such as electronic health records, systems to prompt clinicians and deliver feedback on performance, and requirements for reporting on outcomes such as control of high blood pressure and the proportion of the population up-to-date on chronic disease screenings can encourage providers and health plans to focus on preventive services. Effective outreach to consumers and reducing barriers to accessing these services is also key, as coverage alone will not ensure use of preventive services.

Short Term Objective: ***By 2014, at least 5 new health care providers/organizations will begin implementing quality improvement chronic disease models of care.***

Strategies:

3.1 Advocate for the adoption of quality improvement chronic disease models of care to advance consistent delivery of high quality care.

Integration Activities:

3.1.7 Convene and assist health-care providers in identifying actions to improve coordination and quality of care and facilitate systems change.

Examples of how this might be implemented:

- Electronic health records with registry function, decision support and electronic reminders.
- Team-based care.
- Systems to ensure adequate follow-up of abnormal screening tests and timely treatment.
- Patient-centered medical and dental home.
- Health care information systems with automated physician prompts or patient reminder letters for screening and follow-up clinical counseling or referral.

Key Terms to understand:

Health care providers:

Health care provider is an individual or an institution that provides preventive, curative, promotional or rehabilitative health care services in a systematic way to individuals, families or communities.

Coordination and quality of care:

Provide safe, effective, efficient, patient-centered, high quality and equitable care to all.

Systems change (in health care setting):

Systems change describes specific strategies that health care administrators, managed care organizations, and purchasers of health plans can implement.